

Amendments to the Specification

Please delete the paragraph starting on page 18, line 8 (counting blank lines). The deleted paragraph is shown below.

~~A more detailed understanding of one suitable SAN implementation of a shared access file management system made by IBM may be had from the attached APPENDIX A, which describes functions and procedures for interfacing between a commercial file system storage unit and its file management system meta data controller (or native storage unit file system meta data controller), denoted FSMDC and the SANergy network shared access layer. APPENDIX B attached hereto further describes the higher level communications and control functions of the SANergy system, i.e., the interface protocols and necessary data and messaging structures for effecting such shared access and interfacing with the different equipment and system layers. Such a system is replaced by (in some embodiments of the present invention), or preferably augmented by (in other embodiments), the direct mount system as set forth above herein, that operates without prior authorizations for some or all data accesses, and allows clients 130 to directly mount the file system for accessing files under many conditions, using local fully cached storage data.~~

Please amend the paragraph starting on page 19, line 6 (counting blank lines) as follows:

a' The "server" MDC 120 may monitor the file storage to detect all file writes or identify changes in files and their storage addresses, to publish the change lists 131, which are received and cached by the client nodes 130. ~~Such monitoring and determination of change lists, may for example be effected in a relatively straightforward way for the SANergy network protocol and an underlying FSMDC interface described in APPENDICES A and B.~~ This assures that the node 130 does not use out-dated locally-cached meta data or data, and that the MDC is able to maintain integrity and coherence of data files that have been moved or modified. However, the invention is not limited to SANergy-type file management systems, but may be advantageously

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applied to any network file system to integrate direct mounting of the storage device and greatly enhanced speed for a substantial portion of the file access transactions. Thus, the invention extends a conventional file management system.

Please replace the abstract of the invention with the following rewritten abstract:

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Provided are implementations for improved access to information stored on a storage device. A plurality of first nodes and a second node are coupled to one another over a communications pathway, the second node being coupled to the storage device for determining meta data including block address maps to file data in the storage device, and the first nodes being configured for accessing file data from the storage device using said meta data, wherein at least one first node caches data including meta data for a file accessed by said first node. A file application on said first node is configured to get requested file data by accessing said cached data for the file. A file notification system sends a file change notification to said first node indicating changes affecting the cached data, wherein the file application on the first node inspects the change notification to determine whether to get the requested file data directly using said cached data, whereby file accesses may be effected for an extended time with data locally cached at first nodes of the system.
